



CENTER SCENE

GET THE FAX ABOUT ALMRS

The ALMRS INFO-FAX, (303) 236-1115, has been operating since September exclusively to receive and answer questions about ALMRS and related systems at the Service Center. Questions are received by INFO-FAX Coordinator Karen Miranda and referred to the appropriate Project Managers. Responses are guaranteed within 3 working days.

The INFO-FAX was established on a trial basis through the end of December 1992, to provide BLM field personnel better access to SC information. The INFO-FAX system is currently being evaluated and a decision will be made this month whether to continue its operation.



Karen Miranda, SC-323, is the face behind the INFO-FAX.

Questions have been received on a variety of topics, including administrative and budgetary concerns; capacity planning; facilities preparation; hardware, software, and telecommunications; testing and evaluation; and training. Answering questions has involved combined efforts from several project managers and their staffs.

Recent questions from the field, along with the SC answers, were published in Appendix F of the December 15, 1992, version of the *ALMRS/Modernization Implementation Plan for Administrative Systems*. The plan is revised quarterly and is sent to modernization points of contact, State management teams, and others. To add names to the distribution list, fax requests (including names and office codes) to the ALMRS/Modernization Project Office, SC-313, attention Mel Valerio, (303) 236-0831.

— MANAGEMENT OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS —

What does the Bureau of Land Management have to do with hazardous waste? How are people at the Service Center involved?

BLM is responsible for cleanup of hazardous waste and proper management of hazardous materials associated with authorized use of the public lands managed by the agency. To facilitate hazardous materials management, the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) recommended that BLM establish a core group of persons with experience and expertise to serve as an internal consulting and assistance group to all BLM offices and programs.

In 1991, this core group was established at the Service Center as part of the Branch of Physical Sciences (SC-212) in the Division of Resource Services (SC-210). The Hazardous Materials (HM) Section provides Bureauwide technical, scientific, engineering, and operational support regarding hazardous materials management.

The staff currently is made up predominantly of employees with expertise in the physical sciences, specifically geology and hydrology, including Brent Lewis, Senior Geologist, Steve Barrell, Geologist, and Tom Olsen, Hydrogeologist. In addition, other members of the staff, including David Schafersman, Section Chief, Ken

Smith, Paralegal, Karl Ford, Toxicologist, Rhio Jackson, Surface Protection Specialist, and Tom Morris, Program Automation Management Coordinator, have expertise in toxicology, chemistry, hazardous materials laws and regulations, and data management. M.J. Smart provides administrative assistance to the staff.

Evaluation and cleanup of hazardous waste sites are a priority for the HM Section. The section provides different levels of service for hazardous waste site evaluation, removal, and remedial action, such as:

- Consultation regarding issues and situations involving hazardous materials
- Assistance with project inspections, sampling, and review of previously collected data
- Project management for projects under the direction of a State Director

If you have further questions concerning hazardous materials management, please contact either Mike Kirby, Branch Chief, at (303) 236-8858, or David Schafersman, Section Chief, at (303) 236-1143.

OOPS—WE BLEW IT!

We would like to correct some errors that occurred in the December issue of *Center Scene*:

- The first line of *American Indian Observance* on page 1 should have read, "Service Center employees participated in an American Indian observance on November 10, 1992."
- Mike Garratt's name was inadvertently left out of the photo caption under *New Project Manager* on page 3. Mike is seated at the left. Sorry Mike!

PERSONNEL NEWS

New Employees:

Judy Bowers, Land Records Specialist,
SC-344
Marilyn Hutchinson, Real Property Clerk,
SC-651

Separations:

Kendra Ferback, Student Trainee,
SC-212
Raydel McGinness, Voucher
Examiner, SC-616



TSP HIGHLIGHTS

The following information on the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is from the November 1992 Highlights for Thrift Savings Plan Participants and other TSP information.

Changes to TSP. Effective January 1, 1993, a new law will require 20 percent Federal income tax withholding on certain TSP withdrawal payments unless you have your payments transferred directly to an IRA or other eligible retirement plan, or you choose a withdrawal option under different withholding rules. This new law will not affect the amount of tax you must pay, only the amount withheld. Contact Mary Haugland in Personnel at 236-6561 for further information.

TSP Statements. Statements are issued every 6 months by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board's recordkeeper, the National Finance Center (NFC). Statements for May 1-October 31 are mailed in late November; statements for November 1-April 30 are mailed in late May. If you are a TSP participant and did

not receive a statement in late November, please contact Mary Haugland at 236-6561.

Leaving Federal Service. To help make withdrawal of your TSP account go smoothly: (1) ask your personnel office for the TSP Withdrawal Package (tax information dated 12/91 or earlier may be obsolete); (2) make sure your personnel office submits a Separation Code and Form TSP-18, Validation of Retirement Information, to the TSP Service Office (otherwise, you cannot receive your benefits); (3) check your personal information at the top of your statement and have erroneous information corrected immediately; and (4) if you have a TSP loan, you must repay it in full or wait until a taxable distribution is declared before you can withdraw your account.

Transferring to Another Agency. Inform your new personnel office that you are a TSP participant and give them a copy of your latest Election Form (TSP-1). Be sure to check your first leave and earnings statement at your new agency to see that your contributions are correct. If you have

a TSP loan, inform the TSP Service Office of your transfer so they can send a copy of your Loan Payment Allotment Form to your new payroll office. Also inform your new payroll office that you have a loan, and, if your loan payments do not start immediately, contact them for assistance. It is your responsibility to ensure that your loan payments resume.

TSP Information. The TSP Inquiry Line at (504) 255-8777 is available 24 hours a day. With the Personal Identification Number from your statement, you can call for your account balance, rates of return, the amount you may be eligible to borrow, and current loan interest rates. You can also ask for an Interfund Transfer Request form (TSP-30) or for the status of your withdrawal request (if separated). The volume of calls has nearly doubled in the last year, with Monday being the busiest day and 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. (central time) being the busiest hours.

20RF

"Ooo, what is that?" "Oh, that poor goose!" "I'm going to call someone to cut that thing off!" These are a few of the comments uttered as people notice the goose with the green collar wandering around the Federal Center.



According to Ray Boyd, Service Center Wildlife Biologist, the goose is one of last spring's young. After the young

hatched, the goose population at the Federal Center was too large, so some were trapped and shipped to areas in Kansas and Nebraska that wanted to start populations. This goose was one of the bunch that went to Kansas, where it was banded on July 2 with both a leg band and the collar.

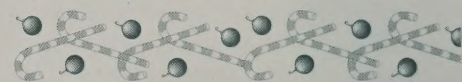
Ray says that because they are unfamiliar with where they hatched, it is unusual for the young of the year to return. This goose probably followed some adults back to the Federal Center. Ray also says that the collar, which has the identifier "20RF" on it, is expandable and does not hurt the goose.

So, if you should happen to see the goose with the green neck, give it a gander, but don't stare—you might give it a complex!



This year, the Division of Personnel initiated a special Christmas project—they voted to contribute the money they would have spent on gifts for fellow employees to the Santa Project. By press time, the Division had collected \$98.

The Santa Auction, held on December 2, raised \$745 for the Santa Project. Santa's elves collected donations and wrapped bundles in time for Santa to make his deliveries on December 23.



CASU SALE

The CASU Personal Property Center sale of excess Government property will be held in January and again in March. Federal employees, as well as the general public, are welcome to bid on any item. Items may be viewed on January 11-15 and March 8-12, 1993, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., in Building 41, Entrance E-21. Bid opening dates are January 20 and March 17, 1993, at 8:00 a.m. For further information, please call 236-8105 or 236-8141.